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FOREIGN AND INSULAR.

AUSTRALIA.

SYDNEY—Examination of Rats for Plague Infection.

The following information is taken from bulletins issued by the department of health of New South Wales:

During the month of October, 1910, there were destroyed 6,793 rats, of which number 2,188 were examined for plague infection. No plague-infected rats were found.

The last case of human plague at Sydney was reported May 29, 1909. The last plague-infected rat was found April 25, 1910.

CEYLON.

COLOMBO—Quarantine and Disinfection System.

Consul Magelssen reports, November 12:

The system of quarantine and disinfection in operation at the port of Colombo is thorough, and the fact that although Ceylon is situated in the center of the plague area of the East not one case has occurred since the system was introduced some years ago speaks well for its efficiency. The department is under the Government and is directly controlled by the plague committee, the executive officer being the port surgeon.

When actual cases of disease are found on board a vessel, the cost of isolation of passengers must be guaranteed by the companies' agents, but disinfection, both personal and of effects, is performed without charge of any sort.

In the event of an actual case of serious infectious disease other than plague on board a vessel, the patient is at once landed, a report made to the chairman of the plague committee by the port surgeon, and subsequent action taken in accordance with the orders of that body. No case of plague, however, is allowed to be landed, and any vessel having on board a person infected with this disease is sent on to Galle or Trincomalee, where special arrangements exist for the isolation of such patients.

In the case of vessels without sickness on board but coming from infected ports and arriving at Colombo before the expiration of the the quarantine period, a very thorough system of disinfection is practiced. The quarantine period which must elapse between a vessel's clearing from an infected port and being considered officially clean by the authorities at Colombo varies with different diseases; in the case of cholera it is 5 days, while with plague and smallpox it is 10 and 18 days, respectively.

In the event of such a vessel coming into Colombo before the expiration of the quarantine period, it is first inspected by the port surgeon, and after he has passed the vessel as free from actual disease, the first and second class passengers are at liberty to land at once,